



*The Insider*, the monthly newsletter of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, will keep you in the loop on all of the organization's upcoming events.



*Tutors filled the Boardroom at Bloomfield Public Library last month for a chance to hear Perrine Robinson-Geller, board president of Literacy New Jersey, discuss "Using Age Appropriate Books in Adult Literacy," a tutor support workshop.*

### *The Insider*

The matter of finding a suitable book to help an adult learn English can be a bewildering task for a literacy volunteer. Will a grammar textbook engage them and hold their interest? Would a children's book offend them? Where do you find appropriate books and how do you use them? There appear to be no easy answers. So when Perrine Robinson-Geller agreed to present a workshop last month on "Using Age Appropriate Books in Adult Literacy," our tutors filled the Bloomfield Public Library Boardroom to listen and learn.

They were not disappointed. Perrine, the board president of Literacy New Jersey, discussed the selection and use of "trade books," or published literature, for adult students. She also brought along more than 200 trade books she's acquired over the years and allowed tutors time to wander the room, explore the materials, consider what makes the books suitable for adults and how they might use them to teach. Here are a couple of online links she provided in which hundreds of trade books are listed.

Easy Reading Material for Adult Learners

<http://xfin.tv/1T7TTW1>

Eureka! AGORA (Assemblage of Great Online Resources for Adults)

<http://bit.ly/1T7CxZI>

### In the News

To view the following stories, copy and paste the highlighted websites into an internet search

#### **"Newark ID cards bring immigrants out of the shadows" Editorial, The Star-Ledger**

Newark is the first New Jersey city to issue its own identification cards, a recently-announced move that is expected to benefit unauthorized immigrants, the homeless, the elderly, and others who don't drive and often have trouble getting to a state motor vehicle office to apply for an ID. Newark's plan is modeled on a program created last year by New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, and could help the city integrate and promote civic engagement in immigrant communities, the editorial states. <http://bit.ly/1G6mxju>

#### **"Real test after Christie's call to drop Common Core: What comes next" NJ Spotlight**

In the aftermath of Gov. Chris Christie's announcement that he no longer supports the Common Core State Standards, what are the administration's plans setting its own standards for New Jersey's public schools? <http://bit.ly/1JjtIMV>

#### Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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*Maryana, right, has worked with tutor Artie Hymowitz for a little more than a year. In that time, their friendship has blossomed and extended to their families.*

## Getting to Know Us

**Maryana, LVA student  
Artie Hymowitz, tutor**

They've worked together for just over a year, but Maryana and Artie Hymowitz don't see themselves merely as student and tutor. They're more like family, if you hear the two women tell it.

"She is my American mother," said Maryana, her smile broad and radiant. "She is my Ukrainian daughter," added her tutor, Artie, as the pair exchanged hugs during a break in a recent tutoring session.

Even this short exchange leads Artie to note her student's progress. "We could not have had this conversation a year ago," she said.

It was then that Maryana, a native of western Ukraine, enrolled in LVA and was assigned to work with Artie. She had arrived in the US a few months earlier with little knowledge of English. In New Jersey, she lives with her husband, an American citizen from her Ukrainian hometown, and their children - a son, age three, and daughter, 17.

But some relatives, including her mother, remain in the Ukraine, a nation now embroiled in war with Russia and Russian separatists. In the Ukraine, she was the manager of a popular local restaurant. Here, in Passaic County, she works as a cook in a Russian restaurant. She speaks Russian and Ukrainian and, thanks to her sessions with Artie, her English improves weekly.

Their lessons don't always come straight out of a grammar text book. And they don't always take place at a table at the local library. They've met at Michael's, an arts and crafts supply store, where Maryana purchased materials for a scrapbook and other art work she later constructed for her son. Artie sometimes helps.

"We've made different projects," Artie said. "Working with her son helps Maryana to practice vocabulary."

On another day, they found themselves at the Nevada Diner in Bloomfield. There, Maryana tackled a stack of red velvet pancakes for lunch, delighted that she could read the diner's menu.

Their friendship has even extended to their families.

"They've had us at their house and they've taken us out to dinner," Artie added. "A few weeks ago they came here and we made sushi." The occasion was the birthday of Artie's daughter, who speaks some Russian, and it amounted to a bilingual celebration.

"It was a good experience for Maryana," Artie said.

## Tutor Support Workshops

Please RSVP

### "Pronunciation and Accent Reduction," with Nina Peysner

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Library Theater

Tuesday, June 9, 2015, 2:00-3:30 pm

Please bring a small hand mirror and an audio recorder (smart phone, tape recorder, etc; we'll share devices)

## Tutor Training Workshops

### South Orange Public Library

65 Scotland Road, South Orange, NJ 07079

Saturdays, 12:15 – 4:45 pm

September 12, 19, 26, October 3, 2015

### Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

2<sup>nd</sup> floor Boardroom

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

September 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, October 1, 2015

## NJALL Webinar

June 9, 2015, 3-4 pm

"WIOA (Workforce Investment Opportunity Act) and Its Implications for Adult Education Programs"

This free webinar will review some major changes the law is creating at the program level, including curriculum and professional development. Webinar descriptions and registration information available at: [www.njall.org](http://www.njall.org)

*Literacy opens a wide door to life. Help us keep that door open with your donation!*

*Thanks in large part to you, we are able to aid hundreds of students each year. Please continue your efforts to improve the lives of others by giving the gift of literacy. You can contribute through our website – <http://www.lvanewark.org/donatetolva/> or by mailing us a check.*